



# Department of Justice

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## **HOGSETT ANNOUNCES GUILTY PLEA OF FEDERAL INMATE FOLLOWING DEATH THREATS, ANTHRAX HOAX**

*More results as U.S. Attorney's Office focuses on protecting federal prison staff, officials*

### **PRESS RELEASE**

TERRE HAUTE – Joseph H. Hogsett, the United States Attorney, announced today that Michael F. Disch, age 43, has agreed to enter a plea of guilty to charges of mailing threatening communications. This follows an extensive investigation by the Federal Bureau of Investigation — Joint Terrorism Task Force.

“This office made a commitment last year to do all within our power to ensure the safety of all those who work in or around the federal prison system,” Hogsett said. “In addition, hoax cases such as this one also highlight the importance of remaining ever-vigilant of the very real threat that terrorism poses in this day and age.”

Documents filed with the court indicate that in July 2009, Disch mailed a threatening letter to the Honorable Senior Judge Larry J. McKinney, a federal judge in Terre Haute. The letter contained what was later determined to be an inert white powdery substance with instructions to, “Smell this and Die.” Disch wrote that he would pay a person to find out where Judge McKinney lived and would have him and members of his family killed.

According to Assistant U.S. Attorney Cynthia J. Ridgeway, who is prosecuting the case for the government, Disch faces a sentence of up to 8 years in federal prison.

A defendant is presumed innocent and is entitled to a fair trial at which the government must prove guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

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